

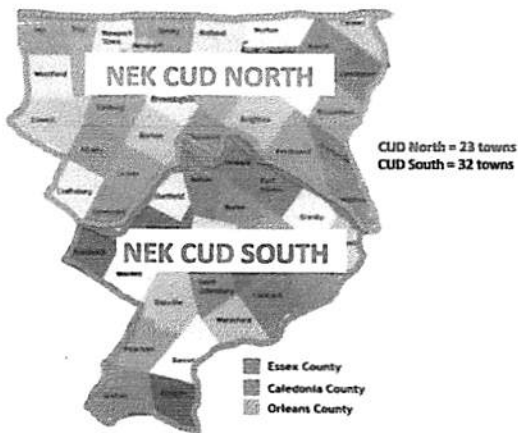
## NEK Community Fiber - Increasing Broadband Access in the Northeast Kingdom

**NEK Broadband Goal** - Today, fast, reliable and affordable internet is as much a necessity as electricity. Our region is falling behind (see next page for town level data). NEK Community Fiber seeks to ensure every E911 business and residential address in the NEK has access to a minimum speed of 100 Mbps, symmetrical at an affordable price.

**Forming a Communication Union District** - A Communication Union District (CUD) is a municipal entity, made up of 2 or more towns, with the specific purpose to build, maintain, and operate broadband infrastructure in order to provide high speed internet to all residents in member communities. Membership in a CUD poses no financial risk to the town or individual taxpayers. Any and all costs associated with the investment in communications infrastructure are not borne by the taxpayers of district members. All towns that approve that approve this ballot measure will become members of the CUD and each member town must appoint a representative to the CUD board of directors.

In order to join a CUD, voters must approve the following language at town meeting or a special meeting: *"Shall the Town of [insert municipality] enter into a communications union district (CUD) to be known as NEK Community Fiber, under the provisions of 30 V.S.A. Ch82?"*

**NEK Community Fiber Districts** - In order to serve every town in the NEK, efforts are underway to establish two CUDs to serve the region: NEK Community Fiber North & NEK Community Fiber South.



### Next steps for towns:

1. Appoint town resident to CUD working group
2. Add CUD ballot measure to town warning for vote on town meeting day
3. Conduct community outreach & education
4. Conduct vote on town meeting day

### Connectivity in NEK by Town

- A town can withdraw through the same mean in which they joined the CUD (i.e a town meeting day vote or selectboard vote if the town joined after the CUD was initially formed.). I
- All assets in town that are built by the CUD remain an asset of the CUD though customers with in that town can still receive internet services.
  
- Where can I learn more about the CUD?
  - The full text of the state statute is available here:  
<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/chapter/30/082>
  
- How many towns are in the NEK Community Fiber CUD?
  - We're aiming to have 22 or so towns, which would include all towns in Caledonia County and southern Essex county. Their is another group working simultaneously on a CUD for Orleans and northern Essex county.

**For more information, contact:**

- Northeast Kingdom Collaborative: Katherine Sims, [Katherine@nekcollaborative.org](mailto:Katherine@nekcollaborative.org)
- Northeastern Vermont Development Association: David Snedeker, [dsnedeker@nvda.net](mailto:dsnedeker@nvda.net)
- CUD South - Evan Carlson, [evan@hjalmarcarlson.com](mailto:evan@hjalmarcarlson.com)

County	Town	Total Buildings	% Served 100/100 or Better	% Served 25/3 or Better	% Served 10/1 or Better	% Served 4/1 or Better	% Underserved
Caledonia	Barnet	1015	0%	19%	56%	78%	21%
Caledonia	Burke	1004	0%	54%	58%	68%	31%
Caledonia	Danville	1421	0%	54%	57%	68%	31%
Caledonia	Groton	705	0%	26%	81%	82%	17%
Caledonia	Hardwick	1426	1%	67%	71%	99%	0%
Caledonia	Kirby	274	0%	10%	19%	37%	62%
Caledonia	Lyndon	2277	0%	82%	83%	87%	12%
Caledonia	Newark	597	0%	0%	11%	49%	50%
Caledonia	Peacham	568	0%	51%	79%	81%	18%
Caledonia	Ryegate	674	0%	36%	79%	82%	17%
Caledonia	Sheffield	468	0%	23%	42%	68%	31%
Caledonia	St. Johnsbury	2890	0%	85%	88%	94%	5%
Caledonia	Stannard	141	0%	0%	14%	97%	2%
Caledonia	Sutton	487	0%	22%	28%	53%	46%
Caledonia	Walden	657	0%	12%	56%	94%	5%
Caledonia	Waterford	650	0%	16%	36%	72%	27%
Caledonia	Wheelock	500	0%	11%	32%	70%	29%
Essex	Averill	245	0%	0%	0%	8%	91%
Essex	Averys Gore	8	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Essex	Bloomfield	236	0%	0%	24%	69%	30%
Essex	Brighton	930	0%	63%	65%	87%	12%
Essex	Brunswick	76	0%	0%	9%	30%	69%
Essex	Canaan	621	45%	44%	59%	79%	20%
Essex	Concord	889	0%	29%	51%	79%	20%
Essex	East Haven	214	0%	0%	38%	64%	35%
Essex	Ferdinand	77	0%	0%	3%	18%	81%
Essex	Granby	101	0%	0%	35%	66%	33%
Essex	Guildhall	183	0%	0%	28%	75%	24%
Essex	Lemington	91	33%	32%	32%	62%	37%
Essex	Lewis	47	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Essex	Lunenburg	886	0%	0%	44%	75%	24%
Essex	Maidstone	360	0%	0%	19%	68%	30%
Essex	Norton	221	0%	0%	23%	77%	22%
Essex	Victory	102	0%	0%	12%	69%	30%
Essex	Warners Grant	2	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Essex	Warren Gore	59	0%	0%	0%	13%	86%
Orleans	Albany	615	3%	3%	46%	91%	8%
Orleans	Barton	1478	0%	63%	67%	93%	6%
Orleans	Brownington	558	0%	58%	78%	94%	5%

Orleans	Charleston	768	0%	59%	65%	91%	8%
Orleans	Coventry	531	0%	45%	54%	82%	17%
Orleans	Craftsbury	720	8%	8%	29%	92%	7%
Orleans	Derby	2473	0%	77%	83%	91%	8%
Orleans	Glover	806	0%	14%	46%	85%	14%
Orleans	Greensboro	824	1%	9%	43%	94%	5%
Orleans	Holland	458	0%	1%	29%	75%	24%
Orleans	Irasburg	628	0%	28%	39%	84%	15%
Orleans	Jay	538	0%	63%	63%	66%	33%
Orleans	Lowell	556	0%	0%	32%	68%	31%
Orleans	Morgan	809	0%	65%	72%	90%	9%
Orleans	Newport City	1879	0%	98%	99%	99%	0%
Orleans	Newport Town	865	0%	47%	55%	86%	13%
Orleans	Troy	879	0%	77%	81%	90%	9%
Orleans	Westfield	375	0%	32%	48%	68%	32%
Orleans	Westmore	590	0%	0%	27%	92%	7%

Source: [publicservice.vermont.gov](http://publicservice.vermont.gov)

### CUD Frequently Asked Questions

- What is the cost to the taxpayer and town?
  - The taxpayer and town are not required to pay anything to be a part of the communications union district. A CUD may ask the town to provide space for a communications plant used to store fiber optic cable, electronics and other assets required to operate the towns network.
- Is the taxpayer or town liable if the CUD goes belly up?
  - The state statute (specifically - § 3056. Limitations; taxes; indebtedness and § 3083. Dissolution) make it quite clear that the taxpayer and towns may not be held liable in anyway for the debts of the CUD.
  - All fiber assets and built infrastructure of the CUD are liable to seizure.
- How does a town join the CUD?
  - A town can join a CUD in two ways:
    - The initial CUD must be established through a town meeting day vote, where all initial member towns vote to form municipality.
    - After initial CUD is formed a member town can be added through a selectboard vote or another town meeting day vote
- Can a town withdraw from the CUD?

*Bonds  
Loans  
Grants*